

Ocotillo Wells SVRA Is Proud to Present
“Hot Stars and Heavenly Bodies”
Friday, March 8th and Saturday, March 9th
Call: 760-767-5393 for more details

Join us at Ocotillo Wells on the weekend of March 8th and 9th to help us celebrate the desert’s dark skies in a very special way. This free and open festival will feature guest astronomers Paul Maag, Steve Kennedy, Steve Matousek and Andy Boden who will join staff interpreters Kerry Soltis and Ken Conway for a weekend-long event. At Ocotillo Wells we have a tradition of weekend off-highway riding during the day and stargazing at night. Become a Dark Sky Ranger at Ocotillo Wells and have some hot chocolate with the stars. Watch for special Jr. Ranger astronomy programs on Saturday! Make your plans to circle up the wagons and camp out on March 8th and 9th.



Paul Maag joins us from Palm Springs, CA. Paul’s day job is Alternative Media Specialist and Counselor at the College of the Desert. He specializes in adaptive/assistive technologies in order to increase learning opportunities for disabled students. Paul is a published author and writes about mountain biking in the local area. Check out his book “Mountain Biking around The Coachella Valley.” He is also an amateur astronomer and pioneered using video cameras with the astronomical telescope. Paul utilizes a MallinCam CCD observational video system attached to his 22-inch Starsplitter telescope. The sensor in this video system produces amazingly-detailed, colorful astronomical images with astounding quality. Come see his live projected images of galaxies and nebula at the Ocotillo Wells Amphitheater.

Steve Kennedy, owner of Kennedy Optics of Yucca, CA. His company specializes in the production of custom telescope optics. Steve custom grinds mirrors from 22-inches to 32-inches for use in Newtonian-style telescopes. He personally grinds, polishes, hand figures, and star tests every mirror until they produce images that will satisfy the most discriminating observer -- you. Steve’s passion is producing exquisite, large-aperture Newtonian optics for the discerning observer. Come share his passion for astronomy. Steve will set up his amazing 28-inch telescope so prepare to step up the ladder and observe the heavens in a whole new way.



Steve Matousek a spacecraft engineer from JPL will speak about the Juno Mission to Jupiter. Juno is a 5-year-long mission to unlock the secrets of early solar system formation. This spacecraft left earth in August of 2011 and will begin to orbit Jupiter in the fall of 2016. Mr. Matousek will bring and share his personal telescope and camp out with us for the weekend. For students this will be an inspirational opportunity to meet an explorer of the 21st century and talk one on one! Join Steve Matousek and the staff at Ocotillo Wells for a weekend of exploration and discovery! Check out the Juno mission at:
http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/juno/main/index.html
<http://www.youtube.com/NASAJuno>



Mr. Searcy is a US Naval Academy graduate and naval engineer with an abiding love of astronomy. He is an experienced docent at Palomar Observatory, an officer and the outreach director of the San Diego Astronomy Association, and an observing assistant at the San Diego State University's Mount Laguna

Observatory. Mr. Searcy will talk to us about the history of Palomar Observatory and the research being done there. Half the park is after dark! Join us for a very special weekend as we explore the wonderful dark skies here at Ocotillo Wells SVRA.

Go big or go home! That’s what we say at OW!

